

Message Text

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PAGE 01 REYKJA 00009 051934Z

53

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-10 AGR-10 AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01

CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 OFA-01 COME-00 DLOS-04 DOTE-00

EB-07 EPA-04 ERDA-07 FEAE-00 FMC-02 TRSE-00 H-02

INR-07 INT-05 IO-10 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

NSF-02 OES-05 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 SAL-01 /147 W

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R 051545Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5912

INFO COMICEDEFOR

CINCLANT

CNO WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

UNCLAS REYKJAVIK 0009

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS PFOR IC UK

SUBJECT: ICELAND-UK FISHERIES DISPUTE: PM REJECTS DRASTIC STEPS

AGAINST UK FOR NOW

1. PRIME MINISTER GEIR HALLGRIMSSON, APPEARING ON "OPEN LINE" RADIO PROGRAM JANUARY 4, TOOK MODERATE POSITION IN RESPONSE TO SEVERAL LISTENERS' PROPOSALS FOR STRONG MEASURES AGAINST UK IN CURRENT FISHERIES DISPUTE.

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PAGE 02 REYKJA 00009 051934Z

2. ASKED WHETHER SITUATION, IN WAKE OF RECENT RAMMINGS OF ICELANDIC SHIPS, DID NOT CALL FOR BREAK IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, PM SAID GOI NEEDED EMBASSY IN LONDON TO MAKE ITS SIDE OF STORY KNOWN; MOREOVER, BREAK WOULD SERVE NO POSITIVE PURPOSE. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT IF RAMMINGS CONTINUED, SEVERING OF RELATIONS WOULD BE CONSIDERED.

3. SEVERAL QUESTIONS FOCUSED ON POSSIBLE USE OF NATO MEMBERSHIP AND IDF PRESENCE AS LEVERAGE IN DISPUTE. HALLGRIMSSON WAS ASKED WHETHER ICELAND WOULD WITHDRAW FROM NATO IF COAST GUARD VESSEL WERE SUNK BY BRITISH. HE AVOIDED DIRECT ANSWER, STRESSING INSTEAD DANGEROUS SITUATION THAT PREVAILS, BUT ADDING THAT LEAVING NATO WOULD SERVE NO USEFUL END. MOREOVER, HE SAID, MOST NATO MEMBERS SUPPORTED ICELAND IN DISPUTE. ASKED WHICH MEMBERS THESE WERE, PM SAID HE COULD NOT OFFER CONCRETE PROOF BUT HAD IMPRESSION THAT MOST EXCEPT UK WERE IN SYMPATHY WITH ICELAND.

4. HALLGRIMSSON WAS ASKED IF LAST MONTH'S RAMMING AT SEYDISFJORDUR INSIDE ICELAND'S FOUR-MILE LIMIT WAS "NATO MATTER." HE ANSWERED THAT WHILE FISHERIES ISSUE AS WHOLE WAS NOT ALLIANCE CONCERN, INCIDENTS INSIDE FOUR-MILE TERRITORIAL WATERS "COULD BE NATO MATTER,," ALTHOUGH THERE HAD BEEN NO GOI APPROACH TO ALLIANCE ON SUBJECT.

5. LISTENER ASKED WHETHER GOI HAD ASKED FOR IDF HELP IN DISPUTE. PRIME MINISTER REPLIED IN NEGATIVE AND ADDED THAT NO SUCH REQUEST WAS UNDER CONSIDERATION. ASKED ABOUT RECENT THREAT BY SOME ICELANDIC FISHERIES INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES TO PHYSICALLY SHUT DOWN KEFLAVIK BASE IF NATO DID NOT FURNISH PROTECTION FROM BRITISH, HALLGRIMSSON SAID MATTER HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED IN CABINET AND SUCH ACTION WOULD SERVE NO PURPOSE.
IRVING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, FISHING DISPUTES, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976REYKJA00009
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760002-1233
From: REYKJAVIK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760186/aaaacynp.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: castelsl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2004 by barnescd>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2004 by castelsl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ICELAND-UK FISHERIES DISPUTE: PM REJECTS DRASTIC STEPS AGAINST UK FOR NOW
TAGS: EFIS, PFOR, IC, UK, (HALLGRIMSSON, GEIR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006